

Appl. No. 10/734,843  
Amdt. dated November 7, 2006  
Reply to Office Action of August 15, 2006

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Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method of forming a waist band on an absorbent article comprising:
  - a) forming a stretchable first web front panel having a distal end, first and second side edges, and a retracted length measured between said first and second side edges;
  - b) forming a stretchable second web back panel having a distal end, said second web being spaced apart from said first web first and second side edges, and a retracted length measured between said first and second side edges;
  - c) attaching an elastic band to one of said first and second webs front and back panels, said elastic band having first and second side edges and an outer end, and said elastic band being cantilevered outward from said distal end of said web panel to which it is attached, and said elastic band having a retracted length that is less than said retracted length of said web panel to which it is secured;
  - d) securing an absorbent assembly to said first and second webs front and back panels, said absorbent assembly including a liquid pervious bodyside liner, a liquid-impervious outer cover, and an absorbent positioned therebetween;
  - e) folding said web panel without said elastic band over said web panel with said elastic band so that said distal end of said web panel without said elastic band is aligned approximately even with said outer end of said elastic band; and
  - f) bonding said first and second side edges of said first web, said second web front panel, back panel and said elastic band together by a pair of seams to form an absorbent article having a waist opening and a pair of leg openings; and
  - g) cutting said first web, said second web and said elastic band at said pair of side seams to form an absorbent article, said absorbent article having a front panel with first and second side edges and having a retracted length measured between said first and second side edges, a back panel with first and second side edges and having a retracted length measured between said first and second side edges, and said elastic band having first and second side edges and having a retracted length that is less than said retracted length of said panel to which it is secured.

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2. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein at least one of said first and second webs front-and-back-panels is stretched to stop before said elastic band is attached thereto.
3. (Currently amended) The method of claim 2 wherein said elastic band is stretched while being attached to said web panel.
4. (Currently amended) The method of claim 3 wherein said elastic band is stretched to a greater extent than said web panel to which it is attached.
5. (Currently amended) The method of claim 4 wherein said elastic band is stretched to a stop position and then partially relaxed prior to attachment to one of said webs panels.
6. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said elastic band is secured to one of said webs panels before said absorbent assembly is secured to both said first and second webs front-and-back-panels.
7. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said elastic band is attached to one of said webs panels after said absorbent assembly is secured to both said first and second webs front-and-back-panels.
8. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said elastic band is attached to one of said webs panels at the same time said absorbent assembly is secured to both said first and second webs front-and-back-panels.
9. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein each of said first and second webs front-and-back-panels is stretched from between about 10% to about 500% prior to having said absorbent assembly attached to them.
10. (Currently amended) A method of forming a waist band on an absorbent article comprising:

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- a) forming a stretchable first web front panel having a distal end, first and second side edges, and a retracted length measured between said first and second side edges;
- b) forming a stretchable second web back panel having a distal end, said second web being spaced apart from said first web first and second side edges, and a retracted length measured between said first and second side edges;
- c) attaching an elastic band to said front panel first web after said first web has been stretched from between about 10% to about 500%, said elastic band having first and second side edges and an outer end; and said elastic band being cantilevered outward from said distal end of said first web front panel, and said elastic band having a retracted length that is less than said retracted length of said front panel to which it is secured;
- d) securing an absorbent assembly to said first and second webs front and back panels, said absorbent assembly including a liquid pervious bodyside liner, a liquid-impervious outer cover, and an absorbent positioned therebetween, said absorbent assembly being positioned between said distal ends of said first and second webs front and back panels;
- e) folding said second web front panel over said first web back panel so that said distal end of said second web outer end of said elastic band is aligned approximately even with said outer distal end of said elastic band back panel; and
- f) bonding said first and second side edges of said first web, said second web front panel, back panel and said elastic band together by a pair of seams to form an absorbent article having a waist opening and a pair of leg openings; and
- g) cutting said first web, said second web and said elastic band at said pair of side seams to form an absorbent article, said absorbent article having a front panel with first and second side edges and having a retracted length measured between said first and second side edges, a back panel with first and second side edges and having a retracted length measured between said first and second side edges, and said elastic band having first and second side edges and having a retracted length that is less than said retracted length of said front panel to which it is secured.

11. (Previously presented) The method of claim 10 wherein said elastic band extends outward beyond said distal edge of said front panel by a distance of from between about 1 millimeter to about 75 millimeters.

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12. (Previously presented) The method of claim 11 wherein said elastic band extends outward beyond said distal edge of said front panel by a distance of at least about 10 millimeters.

13. (Previously presented) The method of claim 10 wherein said front panel and said elastic band has a force of retraction, and said force of retraction in said elastic band is greater than said force of retraction in said front panel.

14. (Currently amended) The method of claim 10 wherein each of said first and second webs is ~~front and back panels~~ stretched from between about 50% to about 300% prior to having said absorbent assembly attached to them.

15. (Currently amended) The method of claim 10 wherein each of said first and second webs is ~~front and back panels~~ stretched from between about 75% to about 270% prior to having said absorbent assembly attached to them.

16. (Currently amended) A method of forming a waist band on an absorbent article comprising:

a) forming a stretchable first web ~~front panel~~ having a distal end, ~~first and second side edges, an outside edge and a retracted length measured between said first and second side edges;~~

b) forming a stretchable second web ~~back panel~~ having a distal end and an outside surface, ~~said second web being spaced apart from said first web first and second side edges, an outside edge and a retracted length measured between said first and second side edges;~~

c) attaching an elastic band to said outside surface of said second web ~~after said second web has been stretched from between about 50% to about 300% back panel, said elastic band having first and second side edges and an outer end, and said elastic band being cantilevered outward from said distal end of said second web back panel, and said elastic band having a retracted length that is less than said retracted length of said back panel;~~

d) securing an absorbent assembly to said first and second webs ~~front and back panels~~, said absorbent assembly including a liquid pervious bodyside liner, a liquid-impervious outer cover, and an absorbent positioned therebetween, said absorbent assembly being positioned between said distal ends of said first and second webs ~~front and back panels~~;

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e) folding said second web back-panel over said first web front-panel so that said outer end of said elastic band is aligned approximately even with said distal end of said first web front-panel; and

f) bonding said first and second side edges of first web, said second web said front panel, back-panel and said elastic band together by a pair of seams to form an absorbent article having a waist opening and a pair of leg openings, and said elastic band creating a snug fit at said waist opening; and

g) cutting said first web, said second web and said elastic band at said pair of side seams to form an absorbent article, said absorbent article having a front panel with first and second side edges and having a retracted length measured between said first and second side edges, a back panel with first and second side edges and having a retracted length measured between said first and second side edges, and said elastic band having first and second side edges and having a retracted length that is less than said retracted length of said back panel to which it is secured.

17. (Previously presented) The method of claim 16 wherein said elastic band extends outward beyond said distal edge of said back panel by a distance of from between about 1 millimeter to about 75 millimeters.

18. (Previously presented) The method of claim 17 wherein said elastic band has a retracted length that is at least 2% less than the retracted length of said back panel.

19. (Currently amended) The method of claim 16 wherein said absorbent assembly is secured to both said first and second webs front-and-back panels before said elastic band is secured to said second web back-panel.

20. (Currently amended) The method of claim 16 wherein each of said second web back-panel is stretched from between about 50% to about 300% prior to having said elastic band attached thereto to said back-panel.